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14 October 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subject: Frantisek KUSHAL

1. In September of 1939 Subject was in the LVOV area with his contingent. The Germans were attacking LVOV and the Polish High Command issued orders for the defenders of this city to surrender to the Soviets who were advancing from the East. Although the Soviets had said that they were "liberating" their friends when they took over the Polish army, they interned them in one of three concentration camps: STAROBELSK (KHARKOV Oblast), OSTASHKOV (TVERDSKAYA now KALININGRAD Oblast), or KOZENSK (SMOLENSK Oblast). Subject was taken to the STAROBELSK camp where he was interned until May 1940, at which time he was taken to PAVLIVSHEV BOR (SMOLENSK area near the KATIN Forest). He was not surprised at being taken away from STAROBELSK since, during his entire stay at that particular camp, a number of the Polish officers were periodically being taken out to where, no one knew. On 17 May of 1940 he was taken from PAVLIVSHEV BOR to Moscow to the LUBLYANKA prison where he sat with ANDERS, which fact was mentioned in the latter's Memoirs. The next year, 1941, on 31 May, he was released from LUBLYANKA and returned to his native village.

2. The circumstances of his release from the LUBLYANKA prison are rather interesting and therefore worthy of note. They are as follows:

Between the two wars, Mrs. KUSHAL lived in Western Byelorussia, that is, under Polish rule. In 1939 when the Soviets took over this western section of Byelorussia, the families of all the Polish officers were transported into the USSR. Mrs. KUSHAL and her two children were taken to KASSAKHSTAN where they were interned in a concentration camp. It appeared that Mrs. KUSHAL (ARSENIVA) was a famous Byelorussian poetess, so that when the Byelorussian literary circles learned of her internment in KASSAKHSTAN, they immediately instituted proceedings to free her, on the basis that she, writing in Byelorussia, could do more good for the Soviet Union than she could by sitting in a concentration camp in KASSAKHSTAN. The famous Byelorussian poet, YANKA KUPALA, who was allegedly a literary giant of astounding influence, got interested in the case himself, so that within a short period of time Mrs. KUSHAL was freed, as were her

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children, and brought to Byelorussia. When she got back she somehow learned that her husband was in the LUBLYANKA prison and therefore appealed to KUPALA and the other members of the literary circles of Byelorussia to help her husband out of his predicament. Although it was a long and involved process they finally succeeded in getting him freed.

3. On the second of June 1941, Subject returned to his home village, DORI, in the MINSK province; from there he had to report weekly to the VOLOZHIN NKVD. According to Subject, one week before the Germans attacked, the Soviets began mass deportations of Byelorussians, therefore, he and his family went into the forest. One day after the outbreak of the war the Germans were already in the area.

4. COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE:

a. Since Subject's life from 1941 to 1943 has been pretty much of a blank, a theory has been advanced that he is a Soviet agent. At best, the above story seems rather flimsy. It seems logical to assume that if the Subject were a Soviet agent, his legend would be much better than the above. It may, on the other hand, be countered that such a flimsy story is given purposely because, by its very flimsiness, it could be considered as the truth and would therefore exonerate Subject from being an agent. This, however, gives the Soviet Intelligence service credit for finesse and sophistication of which they, in their thoroughness, are probably incapable.

b. The period from late June 1941 to late fall 1943 is pretty much of a blank as far as our knowledge of the Subject is concerned. It is reasonable to assume one of the following situations of being the truth:

1. Subject felt deep down that the Germans were a civilized, cultured nation and that through them Byelorussia could gain her independence. He, therefore, collaborated with them during the entire period. Another factor which may contribute to this theory is that in January 1944 Subject was appointed by ASTROVSKY, President of the BCR (Byelorussian Central Rada) to the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Byelorussian National Guard. It can be taken for granted that the Germans did not permit the appointment of some individual whom they did not know very well. It is even quite probable that the Germans pointed Subject out to ASTROVSKY for this particular undertaking.

2. It is quite possible that during this period Subject was ostensibly collaborating with the Germans but was actually serving as an agent for the Soviet Intelligence. If this were the case, however, and if he had risen to the height which

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Security Information

he had reached, it is probable that after the downfall of Germany he would have returned to the Soviet Union to receive his due honors. If, on the other hand, the Soviets expected him to continue with his mission, they would have thoroughly documented his background from 1939-1943.

5. In January 1944, Subject was asked by ASTROVSKI to become a member of the Byelorussian Central Rada and to organize a Byelorussian army. With this, Subject proceeded in the mobilization of the Byelorusska Krayovaya Aborona (Byelorussian National Guard). Subject claimed that there were 44 battalions in this unit. In June of 1944 the Soviets attacked on the eastern front and this time some 10 or 15,000 of the Byelorussian National Guard went west where they were reformed into the Byelorussian Waffen SS Division under the command of (Lt. Colonel) ZIEGLING. Subject was the nominal commander of this Division but the liaison man for Colonel ZIEGLING was (Lt. Colonel Boris) RAHULIA (RAGULA). In late March, or early April 1945, ZIEGLING was given the command of a German Youth Division and Subject became full Commander of the Byelorussian SS Division. At this time Subject made contact with General (fnu) MALISOV of BOA (VLASOV's army) and learned that MALISOV was in contact with a United States corps, since "everyone" realized by this time that Germany was on her last legs. Subject and General MALISOV joined forces and fought the German SS Division, which was stationed in ISENSTEINSTADT, going in the direction of the Americans in ZWISSEL. Having successfully fought through the German lines to the Americans, the Byelorussians and the Russians were promptly interned. After a few months of internment, Subject realized that the chances were very good that he would be repatriated; therefore, in June of 1945 he ran away from camp. In retrospect he is very happy about his escape since his friend, General MALISOV, was repatriated and promptly hanged by the Soviets.

6. The Byelorussian Central Rada, having liquidated itself in November 1945, the Subject joined the BNR, with which he has been cooperating to the present time. Currently, Subject is publishing a Byelorussian newspaper in New York called BYELORUS.

7. Subject is 57 years old, has sparse grey hair, grey eyes, finely chiseled aquiline nose, wears dark horn-rimmed glasses when reading, is about 5' 10" or 11" tall, and appears to be every inch a gentleman and a soldier. An interesting sidelight is that the Subject has about him an obsequiousness to governmental authority which seems somewhat typical of many Europeans: when the undersigned thanked him for being so cooperative in the interview, Subject said: "It is my duty!"

8. Subject's address is:

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435 New Jersey Avenue
Brooklyn 7, New York

Telephone No. Hyacinth 6-4674

Pseudonyms: "LITSVIN"

cc: BR/CPP

Note: Case Officer used the name of ☐ during contact.

Address of BR'n in NYC from July 1953:
385 Alabama Ave
Apartment 17
Brooklyn 7
N. Y.

305-7222

- 4 -
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